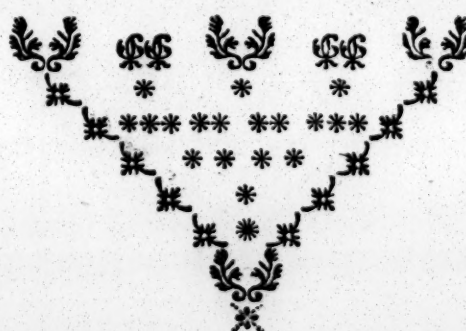


ABRAHAM'S SACRIFICE:

A P O E M.

By Mr. JAMES HOLLYER.



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FROM the third Morning dawn'd the Orient Light,
When *Abraham* gain'd the destin'd Mountain's Height ;
And *Isaac* now, their Journey's Period found,
Had thrown his cumbrous Burthen to the Ground ;
His Load of Wood, with solemn Rite assign'd,
To burn the Sacrifice by God enjoin'd.
And now the ready Care, and zealous Toil
Of Sire and Son, had rear'd the sacred Pile ;
When thus (yet oft with Sighs) his Utt'rance broke,
And oft with gushing Tears,) the Patriarch spoke :

B

Thou

Thou, in whom Heav'n's best Love to me was shown,
 Kind, good, and duteous, Oh, my darling Son!
 Firm to my Soul, whom all dear Ties engage,
 Crown of my Hopes, and Comfort of my Age!
 Now by the Ardor of thy Faith display'd,
 And summon all thy Virtues to thy Aid,
 To hear the Doom, by God's own Voice decreed,
 That thou, Oh, can I speak it! thou must bleed!
 Thy harmless Life, so runs the dread Command,
 Must here be offer'd by thy Father's Hand;
 Fain, fain, Heav'n knows, by strong Reluctance prest,
 And partial Nature pleading in my Breast;
 Fain would I have mistook the sacred Call;
 'Twas Dream, 'twas Fancy, 'twas Illusion all:
 Can God, I reason'd, his own Law controul,
 Impress'd so deeply on the human Soul;
 His Law, which, as the law Divine, they dread,
 Prohibits Man Man's vital Blood to shed?

Did he establish this a Rule to bind,
 Through all successive Ages, all Mankind?
 And can he, ever Gracious, Just, and Mild,
 Can He command me to destroy my Child!
 Alas! why not? who shall maintain the Strife
 With Him, sole Sov'reign, Arbiter of Life?
 On these plain Terms, He gives us all to see,
 Now born, the ætherial Light, and bids us Be,
 That whensoever He, or soon or late,
 Shall summon us to leave our earthly State,
 The Body its congenial Dust must claim,
 The Soul return to God, from whom it came:
 And sure for this, the Time, the Means, the Way,
 'Tis He to choose; his providential Sway,
 Inflicts the sudden Stroke, or slow Decay;
 To each inferior Cause he gives its Weight,
 And arms with all its Darts the Hand of Fate.

Then

Then, great Creator! since 'tis thy Decree,
 That *Isaac* now must fall, and fall by me,
 Prostrate and mute, I bow before thy Throne;
 Thy Name be hallow'd, and thy Will be done.
 Oft thy dread Voice has fill'd me with Delight,
 Or in the Trance, or Vision of the Night;
 And still, as I obey'd it, hast thou shed
 Riches, and Peace, and Honours round my Head;
 Shall I now resist the well-known Call,
 And grudge one Gift to Thee, who gav'st me All?
 Hast thou so blest my whole long Life-time past,
 And shall I now forsake thee at the last?
 Yet, my good God! all gracious as thou art,
 Forgive the Yearnings of a Parent's Heart!
 That my poor Service may be rightly paid,
 Support my Frailness with thy heav'nly Aid;
 And suffer not, by this hard Instance try'd,
 My steadfast Faith in Thee to start aside.

Thus

Thus far his Grief the reverend Sire exprest,
 A copious Flood of Tears forbad the rest ;
 When *Isaac* thus----Ill must it surely suit,
 When God commands, for Mortals to dispute ;
 His Will, once spoke, the whole Creation awes ;
 And, what! am I to make a Moment's pause ?
 But here so plainly stands his Love exprest,
 Here to Obey is only to be blest.
 To God's own Presence, and the Realms of Day,
 With eager Transport catch the effulgent Ray ;
 Snatch'd from the Ill to come, nor doom'd to know,
 The strange Vicissitudes of human Woe.
 Can I, beneath good *Abraham's* forming Hand,
 In heavenly Truth, and steady Virtue stand ;
 Taught, O my God! with one perpetual Aim,
 To love thy Service, and to fear thy Name;
 Can I not hope, unbodied when I roam,
 Where Souls immortal find their destin'd Home ;

In that new World thy Goodness let me share,
 And praise and blest my kind Preserver there.
 Can I thy Mercy not securely trust,
 To hide my human Frailties in the Dust;
 And there admit me, (one short Struggle o'er)
 Where Death, and Sin, and Sorrow are no more.
 But, Oh, my Father! How shall he sustain,
 This Load of Woe, this heart-oppressing Pain?
 Cancell'd at once, to view high Heav'n's Decree,
 Of Blessings to his future Race in me:
 His Hopes all blasted, all his Comforts fled,
 And ^{brought} bring with Sorrow to the Grave his Head;
 Him, though the op'ning Scenes my Thoughts employ,
 Of Heaven and Raptures of Immortal Joy,
 Yet him, with deep Affliction, I condole,
 And feel his Anguish in my inmost Soul.
 With just Rebuke, the Patriarch mild replies,
 In vain, my Son, thy anxious Terrors rise;

Thinkst

Thinkst thou that Change affect^sth' eternal Will;
 Hath God once said, and shall not He fulfill;
 Revolving Time must bring the dreadful Day,
 When Heav'n and Earth dissolv'd shall pass away;
 At once this glorious universal Frame,
 Shall tottering sink amidst the crackling Flame;
 O'er the wild Waste shall Ruin sad prevail,
 But not one Tittle of his Word shall fail.
 Thee, the just Heir of all my Hopes to come,
 His Goodness gave me from the barren Womb;
 Thee the same Goodness, sacrific'd and slain,
 Can raise and quicken into Life again:
 Or as the Seed, which from the Sower's Hand,
 Soon dies, and rots beneath the furrow'd Land,
 Yet with new Strength reviv'd, essays to rise,
 And seek the genial Influence of the Skies;
 The rip'ning Ears that ^{till} yellow Harvest yield,
 And ^{the} A smiling Plenty crowns the fertile Field.

So from what here the hallow'd Pile must burn,
 Ev'n from thy Ashes sleeping in their Urn,
 A new corporeal System he may frame,
 And reinspire the affumiating Flame.
 Events to come, and Fate by God design'd,
 The Counsels of his own Omniscient Mind
 Himself alone surveys; but here we rest,
 That what He Wills must be, and must be best:
 'Tis his, to Man, his Pleasure to display,
 Ours to adore, to tremble, and obey.
 Yet, had it rather pleas'd the Will Divine,
 To spare my *Isaac's* Life, and call for Mine,
 In her own Tenor^{to} let Nature run,
 Nor bid the *Sire* survive the slaughter'd Son;
^{How} Now had I then, my Course all faithful found,
 My End by God's express Acceptance crown'd;
 How had I joy'd to hear his Orders given,
 Calm and submissive to the Stroke of Heaven;

In Praise resign'd my last expiring Breath,
 And meet serene the cold Embrace of Death.
 He said : and both the sacred Rite prepare,
 And both pour out their Souls in ardent Pray'r,
 And humble Hope, Heav'n's weightmost Aid to find,
 Wakes ev'ry latent Virtue in their Mind :
 And now the Altar blaz'd; with inward Strife
Abraham, fore chang'd, uprais'd the glitt'ring Knife ;
 His pious Zeal repress'd his heartfelt Woe,
 Slow rais'd his trembling Hand to strike the Blow :
 When lo ! effulgent with amazing Light,
^A Its Form celestial stood before his Sight ;
 Less glorious shines, his rapid Race to run,
 Forth issuing from his Eastern Goal, the Sun :
 The Patriarch gaz'd, nor Speech nor Motion found,
 And dropt his lifted Weapon to the Ground :
 A pious Care the pitying Angel shew'd,
 And thus his solemn Words complacent flow'd :

D

Sheath,

Sheath, *Abraham*, sheath the Sword ; in gracious Part
 Accepts th' Almighty thy obedient Heart ;
 For the full Forfeit takes thy Service done,
 And freely gives thee thy devoted Son.

Now hear, thou faithful Man, whilst I unfold
 Successive Scenes, illustrious to behold,
 Of Fame to thee, and wond'rous Love design'd,
 On thy distinguish'd Race to human Kind.

Try, if thou canst by numb'ring, to explore,
 All the loose Atoms on the sandy Shore ;
 Or upwards turn thy penetrating Eye,

And count the radiant Spangles of the Sky ;
 Like these, shall *Isaac's* Progeny outgo

What Bounds or Thought can reach, or Number show.

From his fam'd Seed, as Heav'n its Aid supplies,
 Shall States be fam'd, and mighty Empires rise ;

And Kings ordain'd in future Realms to shine,
 Shall boast their royal Stock, deriv'd from thine.

But

But one fair Branch God's larger Love must share,
 His chosen People, his peculiar Care;
 Himself, confess, shall own their favour'd Cause,
 Conduct their Councils, and prescribe their Laws;
 Himself shall raise, inspired with matchless Might,
 For Rule their Judges, and their Chiefs for Fight :
 How ^{oft} for them shall his fierce Wrath confound,
 The faithless Nations gathering all around ;
 How oft shall rise his wonder-working Sway,
 And turn old Nature from her destin'd Way,
 To crush whoever their conquering Arms withstand,
 And Plant his People in the promis'd Land ;
 Whilst the vain World, to impious Rights resign'd,
 To Lusts abandon'd, and to Reason blind ;
 Stray in the Dark, to them, to them alone,
 Shall Heaven's bare Will and genuine Truth be known :
 Religion shall be theirs, her sacred Ray
 Shall Wisdom pour, to guide them in their Way ;

For

For this shall heavenly Seers, directly taught,
 (God's great Design imprest upon their Thought,)
 From Age to Age his gradual Word display,
 And shed the chearful dawning of the Day,
 'Till in full Light *Messiah's* self shall rise,
 Sprung from thy Seed, descending from the Skies ;
 Stupendous Union ! Heaven and Earth combin'd,
 Incarnate God, to rescue lost Mankind !
 With him erst fled from Sin's polluting Stain,
 Shall ancient Virtue visit Earth again.
 Peace sent from Heaven I bless the World below,
 And like the spreading Sea shall Knowledge flow ;
 Mercy divine *Messiah* shall bring down
 To sinful Man ; and mighty in Renown,
 Shall break Hell's Power and tyrannic Chain,
 And end the long Reproach of Satan's Reign,
 He said----and, instant, pleas'd whilst they pursue,
 The great Ideas, vanish'd from their View ;

A thou-

A thousand Thoughts their reasoning Pow'rs controul ;
And deep Amazement fills the lab'ring Soul ;
Yet, all they could to shew their just Regard,
A Beast they bring for Sacrifice prepar'd,
And burn the vicarious Victim to the Lord :
Then, pond'ring all the Wonders of the Day,
With Hearts exulting, homewards bent their Way.

F I N I S.



